

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EUR-25 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 OMB-01 /152 W

----- 120976

R 300530Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5784

INFO USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5745

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, EG, LY, XF

SUBJECT: PRINCE FAHD MAY VISIT LIBYA

1. DURING MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR AKINS DEC 26 MINISTER OF INTERIOR PRINCE FAHD SAID THE LIBYAN CHARGE IN JIDDA HAD RECENTLY PRESENTED HIM WITH A LETTER FROM LIBYAN RCC MEMBER JALLUD, INVITING THE PRINCE TO VISIT LIBYA. FAHD SAID HE HAD BEEN SURPRISED TO RECEIVE SUCH AN INVITATION, IN VIEW OF LIBYA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS SAUDI ARABIA, WHICH ALTERNATED BETWEEN CRITICISM AND HOSTILITY.

2. FAHD ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT SAG DID NOT VOLUNTARILY SEEK ESTRANGEMENT FROM ANY OF ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS, AND HE THOUGHT NO HARM COULD BE DONE IF HE WERE TO VISIT LIBYA AND EXPLAIN TO ITS LEADERS THE BASES AND DIRECTION OF SAUDI POLICY. OUT OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS HE HOPED A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT LIBYAN PERCEPTION OF THE SAG WOULD EMERGE, AND PERHAPS OF THE UNITED STATES AS WELL. (AT THE LEAST, FAHD HOPED HE COULD GET LIBYANS TO DISTINGUISH MORE SHARPLY BETWEEN
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US AND USSR; AT PRESENT HE BELIEVED GOL TENDED TO

REGARD BOTH GOVERNMENTS AS EQUALLY HOSTILE TO ARABS).

3. FAHD SAID FINAL DATES FOR VISIT ARE NOT COMPLETELY FIRM, BUT HE MIGHT BE DEPARTING ON OR AROUND JAN 12. HE PROMISED TO INFORM THE AMBASSADOR FULLY OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH LIBYAN LEADERS AND HIS IMPRESSIONS OF TRIP.

4. AMBASSADOR REPLIED HE WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH PRINCE AT THAT TIME; AS FOR LIBYAN INTENTIONS BEHIND INVITATION, AMBASSADOR WONDERED IF LIBYANS MIGHT BE HOPING TO PROBE THE SAUDI-EGYPTIAN ENTENTE CORDIALE FOR WEAKNESSES, AND PERHAPS THEREBY IMPEDE PROGRESS TOWARD A NEGOTIATED PEACE SETTLEMENT. FAHD AFFIRMED THE SAME THOUGHT HAD OCCURRED TO HIM, BUT THAT IF THESE WERE GOL'S INTENTIONS, THEY WERE CERTAINLY DOOMED TO FAILURE.

5. COMMENT: OMAR SAQQAF, SAUDI MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HAD TOLD THE AMBASSADOR EARLIER ABOUT THIS INVITATION. SAQQAF SAID HE THOUGHT FAHD WAS WRONG TO ACCEPT IT; THE LIBYANS WERE CERTAINLY UP TO SOME MISCHIEF AND FAHD COULD FALL INTO ONE OF THEIR TRAPS. SAQQAF SAID HE WOULD TRY TO BLOCK IT. HE MAY SUCCEED. IT WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST TIME FAHD HAD TRIED TO EMBARK ON A FOREIGN POLICY VENTURE AND THEN, EVEN AFTER ANNOUNCEMENTS OF TRAVEL HAS BEEN MADE, TO HAVE SEEN IT CANCELLED SUDDENLY, ALMOST CERTAINLY ON THE KING'S ORDERS. IF SAQQAF OR ANYONE ELSE CAN PUT THE IDEA INTO THE KING'S HEAD THAT THE LIBYANS WILL TRY TO EXPLOIT THE FAHD VISIT, IT TOO WILL DIE ABORNING.
AKINS

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